

Pyry Järvinen

# **THE SOCIAL OUTSIDER**

Generating Horror Through External and Internal  
Alienation in “The Outsider” and “The Music of Erich  
Zann” by H.P. Lovecraft

Faculty of Information Technology and Communication  
Bachelor's Thesis  
April 2020

# TIIVISTELMÄ

Pyry Järvinen: The Social Outsider – Generating Horror Through External and Internal Alienation in “The Outsider” and “The Music of Erich Zann” by H.P. Lovecraft

Kandidaatintutkielma

Tampereen yliopisto

Kielten tutkinto-ohjelma

Huhtikuu 2020

---

Tämä tutkimus tarkastelee sitä, kuinka vieraantumista käsitellään H.P. Lovecraftin kirjallisuudessa ja kuinka sitä käytetään kauhun tuottamiseen. Lisäksi tutkimukseni olettaa, että Lovecraftin hyödyntämä vieraantuminen jakautuu kahteen alakategoriaan: ulkoiseen ja sisäiseen vieraantumiseen. Analyysin kohteiksi valikoituivat novellit The Outsider ja The Music of Erich Zann, sillä ne edustavat hyvin Lovecraftin tuotantoa kokonaisuudessaan. Näiden novellien valinta johtuu myös siitä, että vieraantuminen on keskeinen teema molemmissa teoksissa.

Tutkimuksen teoreettinen viitekehys koostuu kauhukirjallisuuden genrekonventioiden esittelystä, Rahel Jaeggin vieraantumisen määritelmästä sekä Noël Carrollin teoriasta siitä, kuinka kauhukirjallisuus tuottaa kauhua hirviöiden avulla. Voidaan todeta, että kauhukirjallisuudessa esiintyvät hirviöt tuottavat kauhua hyödyntämällä yhteiskunnallisia pelkoja ja rikkomalla sosiaalisia normeja tekemällä hirviöstä epäpuhtaita eli jollakin tapaa kategorisesti ristiriitaisia tai epätäydellisiä. Näin ollen myös vieraantumista voidaan hyödyntää kauhun tuottamiseen, sillä vieraantuneet henkilöt ovat ristiriidassa itsensä tai yhteiskunnan kanssa.

Tutkimukseni analyttinen osuus etsii vieraantumisen piirteitä tutkimuksen kohteena olevien novellien hahmoista. Erittelen myös, ovatko hahmot ulkoisesti vai sisäisesti vieraantuneita. Lisäksi analysoin, miten hahmojen vieraantuminen tekee heistä hirviömäisiä.

Tutkimukseni osoittaa, että Lovecraft hyödyntää vieraantumista kauhun tuottamiseen siten, että hän tekee vieraantuneista hahmoistaan jollakin tapaa hirviömäisiä. Tutkitussa kirjallisuudessa tämä ilmentyy siten, että The Outsider käyttää kauhun tuottamiseen ulkoista vieraantumista, jossa hahmon vieraantuminen tapahtuu pääsääntöisesti ulkoisten tekijöiden toimesta tämän hirviömäisyyden takia. The Music of Erich Zann puolestaan hyödyntää sisäistä vieraantumista, jossa hahmo etäännyttää itse itsensä yhteiskunnasta ja tekee itsestään näin ollen hirviömäisen. Ulkoinen ja sisäinen vieraantuminen kuitenkin sisältävät piirteitä toisistaan, sillä ne molemmat kuvaavat vieraantumista ilmiönä, joskin eri näkökulmista.

Avainsanat: vieraantuminen, kauhututkimus, kauhukirjallisuus, H.P. Lovecraft

Tämän julkaisun alkuperäisyys on tarkastettu Turnitin Originality Check -ohjelmalla.

# ABSTRACT

Pyry Järvinen: The Social Outsider – Generating Horror Through External and Internal Alienation in “The Outsider” and “The Music of Erich Zann” by H.P. Lovecraft

Bachelor’s Thesis

Tampere University

Degree Programme in Languages

April 2020

---

This thesis analyses how alienation is portrayed in H.P. Lovecraft’s writing, and how it is used to generate horror. Furthermore, this thesis argues that the alienation utilised by Lovecraft falls into two distinct categories: external and internal alienation. To demonstrate this, I will analyse the two short stories “The Outsider” (1926) and “The Music of Erich Zann” (1922). These two stories were chosen, because they are representative of Lovecraft’s work, and because they both feature alienation as a central theme.

The theoretical framework of my thesis consists of an introduction to the genre conventions of horror literature, a brief explanation of alienation as defined by Rahel Jaeggi, and Noël Carroll’s theory on how horror literature generates horror through monsters. In short, the monsters in horror literature generate horror by breaking social norms and exploiting the anxieties related to them. This is mainly achieved through making the monster “impure”, in other words, making them somehow categorically contradictory or incomplete. Thus, it is also possible to utilise alienation for this purpose, as alienated people have a contradictory relationship with themselves or the world around them.

The analytical section of the thesis examines how alienation is portrayed through the characters in “The Outsider” and “The Music of Erich Zann”, and whether they are externally or internally alienated. Moreover, the thesis also analyses how alienation is used to make these characters monstrous.

The thesis shows that Lovecraft utilises alienation to generate horror by making the alienated characters somehow monstrous. “The Outsider” utilises external horror, where the character is alienated due to external reason because he is monstrous. On the other hand, “The Music of Erich Zann” relies on internal alienation, where the main character distances himself from the world around them, which in turn makes him monstrous. However, both external and internal alienation contain aspects of each other, as they are both used to examine alienation in general, although they both do so from different perspectives.

Keywords: alienation, horror studies, horror literature, H.P. Lovecraft

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

## Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	2
2. Horror and alienation .....	4
2.1 The horror genre and its conventions.....	4
2.2 Alienation.....	6
3. The generation of horror through external and internal alienation .....	9
3.1 External alienation: “The Outsider”.....	9
3.2 Internal alienation: “The Music of Erich Zann” .....	12
4. Conclusion .....	14
Works cited .....	16

## 1. Introduction

In my thesis, I will argue that alienation is one of the major themes in H. P. Lovecraft's (1890-1937) writing, so much so that it can be identified as one of the main sources of horror in his stories. Furthermore, the theme of alienation in his work falls into two distinct categories: alienation caused by societal, i.e. external reasons, and alienation caused by personal, i.e. internal reasons. To demonstrate this, I will analyse two of his stories: "The Outsider" (1926) and "The Music of Erich Zann" (1922).

The two short stories were chosen because they both feature alienation as a major theme, as is also the case with Lovecraft's other stories (perhaps most notably "The Shadow Over Innsmouth"). "The Outsider" is a story told from the perspective of a narrator who has lived inside a dark tomb all his life and who cannot remember anything of his past. This is because he is dead, although this is only revealed to the narrator (as well as the reader) at the end of the story. After being trapped in the tomb for some time, he finally manages to leave the tomb, emerging in a graveyard and is immediately drawn to a nearby house where a party is in progress. He enters the house through an open window, when suddenly all the partygoers flee in terror. The narrator then notices a monster standing across from him, stumbles forwards, and upon touching the monster, he realises he is touching the surface of a mirror, and that he himself is the monster. This story ties into the idea of external alienation because the protagonist's expulsion from society is done by others, in this case by the partygoers. Therefore, the main generator of horror seems to be the fact that although the protagonist wants to be part of the surrounding society, he is unable to do so because he is dead.

In the "Music of Erich Zann", the narrator recounts his time living in France, where he was enchanted by the weird music of a mute violist called Erich Zann. The narrator eventually befriends the reclusive Zann, but as days go by, the musician starts to grow more

distant and refuses to let the narrator listen to him play. One night while secretly listening to Zann play, more frantically than ever, the narrator hears him collapse on the floor and rushes to his help. Zann then writes down his life's story for the narrator, but a strange force blows the papers out of an open window. The room goes dark and Zann resumes playing. The story then ends with the narrator fleeing the scene after finding out that Zann has died. Throughout the story, it is implied that Zann's music somehow keeps the strange force outside of his window at bay, or that the force somehow forces Zann to play against his will. Either way, the main generator of horror in this story is internal alienation, as Zann takes an active role in isolating himself. That is to say that he himself is the primary cause of his isolation.

Recently, there has been a growing interest in Lovecraftian horror: this can be seen in the sizeable quantity of literary and visual texts produced in recent years that either wholly rely on Lovecraft's fiction or are heavily inspired by it; for example, *Bloodborne* (2015), *Call of Cthulhu* (2018), and *Annihilation* (2018). Thus, it can be safely assumed that Lovecraft's works are still culturally significant today, and a proper understanding of his works can lend an insight into today's cultural landscape, as well as the fears and anxieties of people which drive them to consume and create horror fiction. In addition, Lovecraft's works have been largely overlooked by literary scholars, even though they have influenced the horror genre greatly.

It is important to note that previous studies, as for example Stefan Dziemianowicz' "Outsiders and Aliens: The Uses of Isolation in Lovecraft's Fiction", have identified isolation as being one of the main themes of Lovecraftian horror. This is connected to the idea of alienation, as isolation is often one of the effects of alienation. However, identification is as far as most studies seem to go, in other words, they only present a broad examination of isolation and alienation as a theme in Lovecraft. Furthermore, most of the studies about

Lovecraft's works are more concerned with examining other features of his writing (see for example Airaksinen; Burleson).

In this thesis, I will use horror studies to establish the conventions of the horror genre and how it uses them to generate horror. Specifically, I will focus on how horror fiction uses alienation to generate horror. The definition of alienation used in this thesis is that of Rahel Jaeggi who examines the concept from a social philosophical viewpoint. The following sections will cover the theory necessary for this thesis by outlining the conventions of the horror genre and how horror is generated, followed by a discussion of alienation. This theoretical framework will then be used to analyse how the two short stories "The Outsider" and "The Music of Erich Zann" by H.P. Lovecraft utilise alienation to generate horror.

## 2. Horror and alienation

This chapter introduces and briefly defines the theories and concepts employed in this thesis. First, an overview of the horror genre and its conventions are provided. This includes theory on how horror literature generates horror in its readers, as well as how horror literature constructs its monsters. The theory in this section is based on Gina Wilder's *Horror Fiction: An Introduction* and Noël Carroll's *The Philosophy of Horror*. Then, Rahel Jaeggi's study *Alienation* will be used to briefly sketch out an understanding of alienation in general and how it can be used to generate horror, in addition to explaining the two types of alienation I have identified in Lovecraft's writing: external and internal alienation.

### 2.1 The horror genre and its conventions

The horror genre, as the name suggests, is all about eliciting a feeling of horror in its reader. Thus, it can be safely assumed that, in order to cause the feeling of horror in its readers, the horror genre utilises various strategies, which can in turn be identified and analysed. For

example, these strategies include depicting the “unthinkable, unnameable, indefinable, and repressed. Split selves, false identities, erupting bodies, unsafe spaces, and hospital or scientific operations and experiments that go horribly wrong” (Wisker 9). Many of these conventions were inherited from the Gothic, from which the horror genre originated (Carroll 13; Wisker 7, 43). Perhaps two of the most important aspects that horror inherited from the Gothic are its exploration of “contradictions and unease in social conventions” (Wisker 43) and its settings, which are usually isolated and dangerous or threatening spaces (Wisker 44), such as “cellars, dungeons, attics, [and] haunted castles” (Wisker 148). For example, the setting of “The Outsider” is very much a Gothic one, as the story is set in a tomb, which is also described as an “infinitely old” and crumbling castle (141). Furthermore, horror fiction explores many of the themes of Gothic horror, as for example “displacement, incarceration, loss of identity, home, heritage, family, friends, and security” (Wisker 147). These themes also heavily feature in both stories analysed in this thesis. Horror then uses these conventions and themes to explore various topics such as societal norms, especially through drawing our attention to the parts that we might find contradictory and frightening (Wisker 145).

How does horror then explore and exploit these societal norms and the anxieties related to them in order to generate horror? One way in which horror fiction generates horror is by presenting the reader with a monster to be frightened of. This monster is characterised not only as physically dangerous, but also as psychologically, morally, or socially dangerous (Carroll 42-43). This is often done by describing the monster as disgusting and repulsive, or as being related to such things (Carroll 22). Specifically, Carroll hypothesises that this is done by making the monster “impure”, that is, making it “categorically interstitial, categorically contradictory, incomplete, or formless” (32). He illustrates his point by stating that “[m]any monsters of the horror genre are interstitial and/or contradictory in terms of being both living and dead: ghosts, zombies, vampires, mummies, the Frankenstein monster, Melmoth the



Wanderer, and so on” (32). The monster is thus not only physically threatening but also cognitively threatening (Carroll 34). Moreover, Carroll states that the monster does not necessarily need to be a monster in the common sense of the word. He gives the example of Norman Bates in Alfred Hitchcock’s film *Psycho*: Bates is a human character who nonetheless fulfils many of the characteristics of an “impure” character, and thus he can be considered monstrous (39). Both “The Outsider” and “The Music of Erich Zann” utilise a monster to generate horror: in the former, the narrator is revealed to be undead and thus monstrous at the end, and in the latter, Zann is made monstrous by the strange force behind his window in the finale of the story.

The monster is usually contrasted with “normal” protagonists or characters who the reader is often expected to sympathise with. That is, they set the norm from which the monster deviates. Furthermore, as Carroll suggests, the characters’ reactions to the monster are supposed to provide the reader with a guideline for their own reaction (17-18). However, this is not the only way in which horror can be generated via human characters. In addition to being frightened by the monster, the reader also reacts to the horrifying situation in which characters are placed (Carroll 95-96). In these types of situations, horror is generated through suspense. A good example of this would be the window in “The Music of Erich Zann”. Reading through the story, the reader will likely start to wonder what might lie behind the window, especially since Zann attacks the narrator when he first attempts to look through it.

## 2.2 Alienation

In addition to monstrous characters and frightening situations, horror fiction may also use alienation to generate horror. This can be achieved by either making the monster of the story embody alien characteristics, or by making the protagonist or some other important character alienated, as is the case with “The Music of Erich Zann” where the alienated character is the

titular Erich Zann and not the protagonist. In Rahel Jaeggi's social philosophical book *Alienation*, where she attempts to combine various interpretations of alienation (mainly those of Karl Marx and Martin Heidegger) into one coherent idea, she defines alienation as "indifference and internal division, but also powerlessness and relationlessness with respect to oneself and to a world experienced as indifferent and alien" (3). Furthermore, she describes alienation as a "relation of relationlessness", defining it as

a detachment or separation from something that in fact belongs together, the loss of a connection between two things that nevertheless stand in relation to one another.

Being alienated from something means having become distanced from something in which one is in fact involved or to which one is in fact related – or in any case ought to be. (25)

That is, an alienated person does not completely lack a relation to the thing that they are alienated from; instead, they are somehow unable to have a meaningful relation to that thing. As Jaeggi puts it, "Alienation is the inability to establish a relation to other human beings, to things, to social institutions and thereby also – so the fundamental intuition of the theory of alienation – to oneself" (3). She further defines an alienated relation as "a deficient relation one has to oneself, to the world, and to others. Indifference, instrumentalization, reification, absurdity, artificiality, isolation, meaninglessness, impotence – all these ways of characterizing the relations in question are forms of this deficiency" (5-6).

According to Jaeggi, for a person to have a meaningful relation with anything, the person must be able to identify with the world around them (23), and to do so a person must be in control of their own actions and desires (34); in other words, a person must have agency in the world they live in. She further describes instances of alienation as being "obstructions of volition and thereby – formulated more generally – as obstructions in the relations individuals have to themselves and the world" (34).

As stated above, Jaeggi defines an alienated relation as a fundamentally deficient and even contradictory one and can therefore be considered “impure” according to Carroll. This in turn could be used by horror fiction to generate horror by representing either party of an alienated relation as a monster. This is the case in “The Outsider” where the alienated protagonist is depicted as a monster, and in “The Music of Erich Zann” where both Zann’s alienated relation to music and Zann himself are made into monsters.

The idea of alienation as a generator of horror further relates to the ideas of external and internal alienation I examine in this thesis. It is important to note that neither external nor internal alienation are terms used by Jaeggi or any other scholar; instead, they are terms devised for the purposes of this thesis. Although they both fit under the umbrella term of alienation, they seem to emphasise different aspects of the concept. External alienation is more focused on the alienated person being unable to relate to their surroundings due to the surroundings themselves preventing the alienated person from relating to them. Internal alienation, on the other hand, is focused on the alienated person causing their own alienation. It is a type of alienation where the person’s own desires and actions cause them to lose their connection to their surroundings. Jaeggi argues that in alienated relations, the alienated person is both the victim and the perpetrator of their alienation; in other words, “Someone who becomes alienated in or through a role at the same time plays this role herself; someone who is led by alien desires at the same time has those desires” (24). Thus, to summarise, external alienation is more focused on the alienated person as the victim of alienation, whereas internal alienation is more focused on them as the perpetrator of their alienation. Although alienated people generally exhibit traits of both, an author may choose to focus on a certain aspect of alienation, at which point internal and external alienation become useful analytical tools.

### 3. The generation of horror through external and internal alienation

The goal of this chapter is to identify the different ways in which Lovecraft utilises alienation to generate horror in the two stories. My initial hypothesis is that “The Outsider” uses external alienation (person as a victim of alienation) to generate horror, whereas “The Music of Erich Zann” uses internal alienation (person as a perpetrator of their alienation) to do so. I anticipate that both stories will feature some characteristics of both internal and external alienation, since this is the case with actual alienation, but that they will focus on one.

#### 3.1 External alienation: “The Outsider”

This chapter argues that “The Outsider” generates horror by having the narrator be rejected by not only the society he wishes to be a part of, but also the reader after it is revealed that the narrator is dead and thus monstrous.

“The Outsider” establishes its first-person narrator as an alienated character in several ways. Firstly, the narrator has no agency in the world around him; he does nothing apart from spending his time reading and dreaming about the outside world. In addition, he is spatially isolated from the world in his tomb and thus physically incapable of having any agency over the world in the first place. Secondly, he lacks any sort of meaningful relation to the world around him due to his death and because he is isolated in his tomb. The narrator remembers nothing of his life, including the fact that he has died, and all that he knows about the world he has learned through reading books. The narrator even comments on his alienated relation with the world of the living:

I cannot recall any person except myself, or anything alive but the noiseless rats and bats and spiders. . . . my first conception of a living person was that of somebody mockingly like myself, yet distorted, shrivelled, and decaying like the castle. . . . I fantastically associated these things with everyday events, and thought them more

natural than the coloured pictures of living beings which I found in many of the mouldy books. (142)

Considering this, his dream of picturing himself “amidst gay crowds in the sunny world beyond the endless forest” (142) appears to be an alienated one. The narrator yearns to be part of a world that he himself acknowledges that he cannot identify with.

Lastly, the narrator’s monstrosity eventually causes him to be rejected by the world he wants to be a part of, which in turn further alienates him from that world. This is exemplified by the party scene in the story: the party the narrator enters takes place at the house where he used to live, and it appears that at least some of the people attending were people he used to know. Because the narrator is both categorically contradictory and interstitial – he is neither truly dead nor living – he is unable to properly connect with the world of the dead (the tomb he lives in) and the world of the living he dreams to be part of. Therefore, he is unable to form a relation to something that he perhaps ought to have one with – or at least something he believes he should have one with. This makes the narrator externally alienated; his alienation stems mainly from the fact that the world around him does not accept him, thus making his desire to be a part of it an alienated one. This is also in direct opposition to how Erich Zann’s alienation is depicted; unlike the narrator in “The Outsider”, Zann consciously and willingly withdraws from the world around him.

The narrator’s monstrosity is also constructed through the fearful reaction that he elicits from the partygoers (145). They represent the “normal” that the narrator’s monstrosity is contrasted against, and their reaction guides the reader’s reaction towards the narrator when he is revealed to be a monster at the very end of the story. This signals to the reader that the narrator is truly horrifying, and that they should be terrified by him as well. Furthermore, the fact that the narrator is revealed to be both the protagonist and the monster of the story is yet another way in which he is made categorically contradictory, and therefore monstrous. This

contradictory nature is used to alienate the narrator from the reader and humanity, which is achieved through both the twist ending and the narrator's description of his life after fleeing the party:

Now I ride with the mocking and friendly ghouls on the night-wind, and play by day amongst the catacombs of Nephren-Ka in the sealed and unknown valley of Hadoth by the Nile. I know that the light is not for me, save for that of the moon over the rock tombs of Neb, nor gaiety save the unnamed feasts of Niktoris beneath the Great Pyramid. (146)

The narrator is therefore able to overcome his alienation, as he is able to connect with this alien world. However, the reader has essentially no means to identify with the world described by the narrator, which further strengthens the narrator's alien nature and monstrosity.

Thus, the story's narrative strategy eventually alienates the reader from the narrator and generates horror. Due to the structure of the story, the narrator initially appears to the reader as a relatively normal human being. The story is told in the first person, and the reader only learns that the narrator is a monster at the end of the story. This strategy enables the reader to initially sympathise with the narrator, which in turn makes the twist horrifying; the reader now realises that they have been sympathising with the monster of the story and is thus alienated from him. It is this reversal of expectations – that the relatable protagonist is in all actuality an unrelatable monster – that acts as the main generator of horror. While the twist may not seem that dramatic to the modern reader, it would have likely been far more so for a 1920's reader who had not been exposed to such twists to the same extent as a modern reader.

### 3.2 Internal alienation: “The Music of Erich Zann”

I argue that “The Music of Erich Zann” relies on internal alienation as one of its main generators of horror. The story generates horror both through the character of Erich Zann and through the strange force behind Zann’s window, which is an embodiment of Zann’s alienated relation to music.

Similar to the narrator of “The Outsider”, Zann is established as an alienated character from the beginning of the story. He is outside of the surrounding social sphere, not only because he is mute, but also because his written French is described as “laboured” and “execrable” (61), making him almost completely unable to connect and communicate with the world around him. Although this makes Zann externally alienated, the story’s focus is on his internal alienation. For example, Zann is described as having chosen his “isolated garret room” (59) himself in order to play his own music in peace, and he only begrudgingly accepts the narrator’s offer of friendship. Furthermore, Zann’s room is described as extraordinarily barren and neglected with the furnishings only accommodating him to play his music. This would indicate that even if he were able to properly communicate with the world around him, he would only focus on his music. This in turn would make him more the perpetrator of his alienation, rather than a victim, as would be the case in external alienation.

However, the main way in which the story generates horror through alienation is Zann’s increasingly alienated relation to music. At the beginning of the story, Zann is said to play in a “cheap theatre orchestra” (59) even though he is described as a genius at several points (59, 61, 62). This would suggest that Zann is only playing at the theatre to make ends meet, especially since he does not play anything else than his own compositions outside of the climax of the story. Therefore, Zann’s relation to music seems to be at least somewhat alienated at the beginning of the story, as he is forced to provide a service he cannot relate to.

This is in line with what Jaeggi states about alienation: “Being alienated from something means having become distanced from something in which one is in fact involved” (25).

Moreover, Zann’s alienated relation with music and the theatre orchestra directly mirrors his relationship with the strange force behind his window. Both effectively force Zann to play music; the theatre orchestra forces Zann to play the work of other composers in order to earn a living, while the strange force compels him to play for his life. Therefore, all the avenues Zann has available for pursuing his dream of playing music become deeply alienating, and it is from this conflict where most of the horror in this story arises.

Zann’s alienated relation to music also manifests itself in the form of the strange force behind his window. The force somehow forces Zann to play music, and throughout the story it is implied that as it gains more power over Zann (indicated by his playing becoming increasingly wilder), the more distant he becomes (61-62). This becomes more evident in the climax of the story when his playing is at its most intense, and he becomes completely detached from the world with his eyes being described as “sightless” and his playing “a blind, mechanical unrecognisable orgy that no pen could ever suggest” (63). This is also the point where Zann, for the first time, plays “the work of another composer” (63), which appears to indicate that he is becoming more and more alienated. Zann’s alienation is then made final, as he dies but is still nonetheless compelled by the strange force to keep playing. He therefore ceases to have any agency over the world or his own actions as the strange force gains complete control over him, signifying that he has become thoroughly alienated. Moreover, this also means that Zann himself becomes monstrous as he is made categorically contradictory; he is both alive and dead, himself and something else.

The window in Zann’s apartment is also an integral part to how the story portrays his alienation. In the story, it is noted that the window in Zann’s room is the only one in Rue d’Auseil from where it is possible to see the entirety of the street, and beyond the wall that



surrounds it. Combined with the fact that it is also through this window that the strange force enters Zann's room to torment him, it could be argued that the window is in fact a window to Zann's psyche. This is further supported by Kálmán Matolcsy's research on the use of analogy and metaphors in Lovecraft's writing, which states that the window acts as a "bidirectional conduit" through which the "unknown entities of the Lovecraftian text can enter the world of human cognition as embodied realities. The cosmic becomes human; the human becomes cosmic" (156-57). Thus, because the embodiment of Zann's alienation – the strange force – can escape from Zann's psyche and enter the material world through the window, the inverse is also possible. The narrator is therefore able to see into Zann's psyche through the window. This can be seen when the narrator looks through the window at the climax of the story and sees "the blackness of space illimitable; unimaginable space alive with motion and music" (63). Thus, he essentially sees the world as Zann sees it: as void of anything but music. It serves to illustrate to the reader how Zann's obsession with music has alienated him from the outside world, leaving the world blank and featureless. Moreover, this also means that the force outside Zann's window is monstrous in itself, as it is both material and immaterial, and thus categorically contradictory.

#### 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, both "The Outsider" and "The Music of Erich Zann" generate horror through portraying the alienated characters in them as somehow monstrous, albeit the way in which they achieve this differs between the stories. Moreover, the characters' alienated desires also play a big role in the generation of horror. The alienated characters in both stories also exhibit qualities of both external and internal alienation to some degree, although the stories seem to prioritise one over the other.

As for future research, both stories also offer differing perspectives on overcoming alienation. In “The Outsider”, the narrator effectively manages to overcome alienation, deciding to embrace his new life of alienation, whereas in “The Music of Erich Zann”, the manifestation of Zann’s alienated relation with music – the alien force outside his window – ends up killing him. Furthermore, the ending of “The Outsider”, specifically the fact that the narrator embraces his alienated identity, would provide an opportunity to research how non-conformity is represented in horror fiction. It would also be useful to examine the concepts of external and internal alienation in a wider context, either in Lovecraft’s other works, or in horror fiction in general. Based on the results of this thesis, researching the representation of alienation in horror fiction may even prove a fruitful subject for a future master’s thesis. However, for a more extensive thesis, as for example a master’s thesis, a more refined definition of alienation is needed. Moreover, it might also be pertinent to examine the wider societal reasons for why alienation became such an important aspect of Lovecraft’s work and horror fiction in general.

## Works cited

- Airaksinen, Timo. "Fighting Nothingness: 'The Music of Erich Zann'." *The Philosophy of H. P. Lovecraft: The Route to Horror*, Peter Lang, 1999, pp. 7-15. *Short Story Criticism*, edited by Jelena Krstovic, vol. 165, Gale, 2012. *Gale Literature Resource Center*, <https://link-gale-com.libproxy.tuni.fi/apps/doc/H1420107940/LitRC?u=tampere&sid=LitRC&xid=0c60d81f>. Accessed 26 Feb. 2020.
- Burleson, Donald. *H.P. Lovecraft: A Critical Study*. Hippocampus Press, 2016.
- Carroll, Noël. *The Philosophy of Horror*. Routledge, 1990.
- Dziemianowicz, Stefan. "Outsiders and Aliens: The Uses of Isolation in Lovecraft's Fiction." *An Epicure in the Terrible: A Centennial Anthology of Essays in Honor of H. P. Lovecraft*, edited by David E. Schultz and S. T. Joshi, p. 159-188. *Short Story Criticism*, edited by Janet Witalec, vol. 52, Gale, 2002. *Gale Literature Resource Center*, <https://link-gale-com.libproxy.tuni.fi/apps/doc/H1420043452/LitRC?u=tampere&sid=LitRC&xid=28a0e6a9>. Accessed 11 Mar. 2020.
- Jaeggi, Rahel. *Alienation*. Translated by Frederick Neuhouser and Alan Smith, Columbia UP, 2014. doi: 10.7312/jaeg15198
- Lovecraft, H. P. "The Music of Erich Zann." *Necronomicon: The Best Weird Tales of H.P. Lovecraft*, edited by Stephen Jones, Gollancz, 2008, pp. 58-64.
- . "The Outsider." *Necronomicon: The Best Weird Tales of H.P. Lovecraft*, edited by Stephen Jones, Gollancz, 2008, pp. 141-47.
- Matolcsy, Kálmán. "The Monster-Text: Analogy and Metaphor in Lovecraft." *HJEAS: Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2012, pp. 151-59.
- Wisker, Gina. *Horror Fiction: An Introduction*. Continuum, 2005.